



## DEAF SERVICES COMMISSION OF IOWA

Commission Meeting  
Friday, August 2, 2013  
Pleasant Hill Public Library  
5151 Maple Drive  
Pleasant Hill, Iowa  
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

The DSCI Commission meeting was called to order by Chair Theresa Legg at 10:00 a.m.

Members present: Theresa Legg, Nathaniel Garrels, Mark Hersch, Tina Kastendieck, Jennifer Keaton, and Bob Vizzini

Members absent: Jennifer Upah

Staff members present: Heidi Smith, Administrator, CAS Division, Lynsie Hanssen and Linda Scott

Staff members absent: Jill Fultano-Avery, Executive Officer, Office of Deaf Services, Stephanie Lyons and San Wong, Director, DHR and *Ex-Officio*

Interpreters: Jeff Reese, Peggy Chicoine, Holly Shannon and Joe Trelstad

Commissioners, staff and interpreters were introduced, visitors recognized and ground rules for the meeting established.

### **Approval of Minutes from May 4, 2013:**

**MOTION #14-01:** Vizzini pointed out that in the middle of the second paragraph under *Licensed Sign Language Interpreters Meeting Competency Standard* on page 2, it should read: Iowa Western Community College (IWCC) offers a three (3) year ITP program. Drake University will begin to offer introductory ASL classes the fall of 2013 with Iowa State University continuing to offer ASL classes as well. There being no further changes, additions, deletions to the May 4, 2013 minutes, motion to approve minutes as presented. **Garrels/Kastendieck.** All in favor, motion carried.

### **Commissioner/Committee Reports:**

#### **Culturally Affirmative Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Aftercare**

**Services:** Keaton advised that mental health services are changing. Magellan has now taken over. Much discussion took place about case managers, mental health vs. mental illness.

**Accessible Legal Representation:** Kastendieck continues to receive reports from police offices in smaller communities in her area. They continue to use family members and underage children to interpret when there's a legal issue and are still being used in hospital settings and medical/dental clinics. There are just not enough licensed sign language interpreters available to service the rural areas.

Hanssen suggested that the sheriff's office and police departments make sure they are receiving training through ILEA/Police Academy. She also encouraged commissioners to

contact their local police departments/sheriff's offices and make sure they understand the ADA and deaf services.

Hersch added that later in the meeting, there would be a presentation that may take care of some of the problems being encountered in these rural communities with technology taking care of some of the problems they face now. Keaton sees the situation as interpreter shortage, especially in the rural areas and it's not about the ADA, but she does think the presentation coming later in the meeting up will help with the situation.

**Licensed Sign Language Interpreters Meeting Competency Standards:** Vizzini recently attended the Iowa Association for the Deaf (IAD) meeting and at that meeting, there was a motion for the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) to work on improving licensure – especially in the field of medical terminology, as there are some interpreters who are licensed to interpret but are not qualified to work in medical settings. The community would like to see screening done, whereby interpreters not qualified to interpret in medical settings be screened out and not given those assignments. They're hoping to hear more from the associations on this and that they'll work with the community to rectify the situation.

Vizzini also talked about the recent meeting with Howard Rosenblum, CEO of NAD and the need to improve attorneys who work with deaf clients. It was also noted up that it might be possible to increase the license fees of interpreters and to use that increased funding to improve the situation. There is a possibility that NAD could help set up a pilot program and work through the Office of Deaf Services to contact interpreters throughout the state to get the program up and running. There are discussions in the works with Lyons on the subject.

**Public Comment:**

None.

**Old Business:**

**Staff Reports -**

**DHR Board:** In the absence of Upah, nothing to report at this time.

**Hanssen:**

- asked for volunteers to write an article for upcoming E-News editions. Garrels will write the first article for the next E-News, then Upah will be asked to write an article for the next and then Hersch will write one for the June edition
- about three (3) months ago attended a workshop on SSI-SSDI – Medicaid and Medicare. Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) has hired five disability resource coordinators for regional centers throughout the state – Des Moines, Waterloo, Spencer, Ottumwa and Sioux City. Hanssen presented on how to work with a person who is deaf and how to provide an interpreter, communication, accessibility, etc.
- is involved in EDRN (Employment Disabilities Resource Network)
- Lyons will be traveling to the five (5) regional centers to set up equipment and provide training on how to use VRI
- about six (6) months ago Lyons attended and gave a presentation to 911 dispatchers, giving them some training on how to work with relay services

- Lyons was given the Dale VanHemert award at the recent IAD Conference. At this same conference the IAD Board was given an award for the ISD Feasibility and Planning Study
- Lyons has been attending and involved in a subcommittee for the Board of Regents meetings and the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) meetings
- a month ago, Lyons met with DHS staff in Davenport and provided them information at on working with interpreters and the role of the Office of Deaf Services

Smith:

- the Disability Prevention Council put together a consortium of people who are involved in disability-related commissions and advisory boards for the state. She attended with Lyons. They wanted to have a better understanding of how the different commissions and advisory boards operated in terms of policy focus and were curious if any of them had a budget (which they do not)

Vizzini wondered who would be attending the EDHI meetings in Avery's absence as he and others felt that they needed a hearing advocate who understands deaf culture and the importance of sign language as a way of communication. Hanssen advised that if Avery was not available to attend someone from the Office of Deaf Services would attend. Vizzini would like to make sure that the office continue to have one person go instead of continually switching personnel as it needs to be someone who will get in there and advocate for deaf because we've had a weak showing and that's a struggle. Smith assured Vizzini that until Avery's return to fulltime, Hanssen and Lyons will be stepping up to take on that role.

Keaton and Kastendieck would like Avery to provide the commission a report about EDHI and give her perspective about deaf services so they know what's going on.

**New Business:**

**Portable Communication Devices –**

Ellen Hayes and Sue Tyrrell provided the commission with an extensive presentation of "things to come". The two individuals have set up a company by the name VRIowa and at present, are tapping into the medical arena and using portable communication equipment throughout the state to fill in when an interpreter has a distance to travel to get to a client, hospital, clinic, etc.

Hersch contacted Hayes about presenting at this commission meeting and providing some background on their services and availability in the state. They provided a demonstration to the commissioners where you could use an ipad or iphone, laptop, etc.

This is a 24/7, 365 day operation with a list of interpreters available to rotate when needed. Right now they are touching upon the medical field; the rural hospitals, but could branch out to sheriff's offices, police departments, and go county-by-county to educate and be used in a variety of ways.

Using the service is pricier than an on-site interpreter, but VRIowa advises people when it's better to have somebody on-site than to try and connect for a short period of time on VRIowa. Hayes and Tyrrell do see educational facilities and businesses using the services when it's hard to find an interpreter. They emphasize, however, that their first goal is to use

a live interpreter because they feel that works the best, but they do want to be able to provide the service across-the-board.

There were questions presented to Hayes and Tyrrell by the commissioners who answered them to their satisfaction.

**Announcements:**

- CRAD meeting is scheduled for Saturday, September 14, 2013
- ISD's homecoming is Saturday, September 21, 2013
- Garrels will be changing his e-mail address and will notify every one of his new address when it's up and running
- the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) will be holding their leadership training In Omaha, Nebraska October 3-5, 2013

Next Commission meeting will be held on **Saturday, November 2, 2013 from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** As soon as a location is found, Commissioners will be informed.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

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Nathaniel Garrels, Vice-Chair

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Linda Scott, Secretary